



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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June 22, 2020

ARNPs United of Washington State
Washington Association of Nurse Anesthetists
Washington State Dental Association
Washington State Hospital Association
Washington State Medical Association
Washington State Medical Group Management Association
Washington State Pharmacy Association
Washington State Podiatric Medical Association

Dear Association Partners:

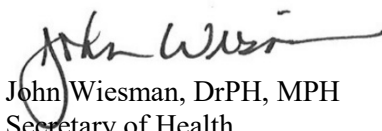
I am writing you regarding the requirement in SB 5380 for all controlled substance prescriptions and refill authorizations to be electronically communicated to pharmacies starting January 1, 2021 (RCW 69.50.312).

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken an unprecedented toll on Washington's health care system over the last several months. Health care providers have been consumed with planning for and responding to the surge of patients needing critical care due to COVID-19. Although the spread of COVID-19 has slowed, the pandemic is not over. I fully expect this public health emergency will continue to require the full focus of health care entities in Washington for some time to come.

In light of this, I am exercising my authority under RCW 69.50.312(3) to grant a nine-month waiver from complying with the electronic prescribing requirements of RCW 69.50.312(1) to all health care providers authorized to prescribe controlled substances and subject to RCW 69.50.312(1) due to the burdens placed on our state's health care entities under the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 outbreak in Washington State. This waiver will expire on September 30, 2021. At that time, all health care providers subject to the electronic prescribing requirement must either be in compliance with RCW 69.50.312(1) or meet at least one of the exemption criteria in RCW 69.50.312(2). The exemption criteria include the possibility of health care providers receiving another waiver issued by the Department of Health.

I deeply appreciate the way in which health care providers have come together to respond to COVID-19. I look forward to our continued partnership in these issues, and all others that affect the health of people living in Washington State.

Sincerely,



John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH
Secretary of Health

cc: Amber Leaders, Office of the Governor
Kathy Lofy, Department of Health
Kristin Peterson, Department of Health
Lauren Lyles, Department of Health
Martin Pittioni, Department of Health
Christie Spice, Department of Health